

HEADREST

Related Applications:

This application claims the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/430,672 filed December 4, 2002, incorporated herein in its entirety by reference.

Field of the Invention:

This invention is generally directed to headrest supports. More particularly, this invention is directed to headrest supports which alleviate direct pressure applied to portions of the scalp area to protect, for example, an individual's coiffure.

Background of the Invention:

Individuals, both women and men style their hair, however when sleeping or resting on a conventional pillow or mattress, individual's coiffures are necessarily crushed or flattened. In order to maintain the style of their coiffure overnight or even when taking a nap, some people attempt to sleep with their heads off the bed by sleeping on their hands, chins, elbows, and even sitting up in chairs. This is not an insignificant issue since people on a daily basis confront the world in many capacities and in almost all situations appearance is a very important factor, especially with respect to work and employment. Consequently, people spend an enormous amount of time and money to maintain and restore their appearance. This is frequently done in the morning

between rising and going to work, and therefore reduces the time available for other things. For Example, in order to get a good night sleep, a person needs to go to bed an hour earlier in order to have sufficient time to restore their coiffure in the morning.

On a daily basis, maintaining a coiffure frequently requires the use of heating products, tugging and pulling of the hair for styling purposes, brushing the hair and setting the hair with curlers or rollers. Over time, these activities stress the hair and scalp as well as consuming in many of cases hundreds of hours a year of a person's time. In addition, there is extra expense for hair care products and extra expense for professional hair care services. Accordingly, there are needs for ways that not only protect the style of a person's coiffure, but also promote healthy hair without daily abuse, expense and time consumption.

In addition, there are other situations in which it is desirable to support the head without applying direct pressure to portions of the scalp area of the head, such as, but not limited to, orthopedic considerations, surgical recovery and positioning the head to control sleep apnea.

Summary of the Invention:

The present invention is directed to a headrest for elevating the head while an individual reclines during sleep. Preferably, the headrest is configured of a pillow made of resilient material such as foam, which pillow has projecting therefrom a foam head supporting surface of limited area which engages only a small portion of the person's head and which is also made of a foam material.

In one aspect of the invention, the pillow has a removable pillow slip thereover which is made of a smooth fabric, such as but not limited to satin.

In another aspect of the invention, the pillow has a permanent cover therearound made of but not limited to cotton.

Brief Description of the Drawings:

Various other features and attendant advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a headrest configured in accordance with the principles of the present invention with a person's head and hair shown in dotted lines;

Fig. 2 is a bottom view of a headrest of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a top perspective view of a foam insert used with the headrest of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken along lines 4-4 of Fig. 1, and

Fig. 5 is a side elevation taken along lines 5-5 of Fig. 1.

Detailed Description:

Referring now to Fig. 1 there is shown a headrest 10 configured in accordance with the principles of the present invention for elevating a person's head 11 to minimize pressure against the person's hair 13 while their head is resting on the headrest. The headrest 10 includes a base pillow 12 made of a compressible material, such as open cell urethane foam, for resting on a support surface 14, such as a bed, couch, or the like. In the illustrated embodiment, the base pillow 12 is rectangular with a first long side 22 and a second long side 24 and a first short side 26 and second short side 28. The long sides 22 and 24 preferably have a length in the range of about 12 to about 30 inches while the short sides 26 and 28 have a length in the range of about 12 to about 20 inches. In a most preferred embodiment, the long sides 22 and 24 are about 24 inches with the short sides 26 and 28 being about 16 inches.

The top surface 30 of the base pillow 12 has a raised portion 34 made of a compressible material thereon which is disposed adjacent to, and preferably substantially flush with, the second long side 24. The raised portion 34 provides a head pillow 35 which is spaced from the periphery defined by the two short sides 26 and 28 and the first long side 22 of the base pillow 12. Since the raised portion 34 forming the head pillow 35 is laterally spaced from the short sides 26 and 28, there are additional lateral areas 36 and 38 for the person's hair 14 to rest on the top surface 30 of the base pillow 12 while their head rests on the raised portion forming the head pillow. Like the base pillow 12, the head pillow 35 is preferably made of open-cell urethane foam.

The headrest 10 preferably has a relatively smooth, outer pillow slip 40 thereon which covers both the top surface of the base pillow 12 of the head pillow 35 and the top surface 30 of the base pillow 12.

While a rectangular form for the base pillow 12 and the top 42 of the head pillow 35 are illustrated in a preferred embodiment, these elements may have other shapes, such as but not limited to circular, semi-circular, oval, or any other suitable configuration.

Referring now to Fig. 2 where the bottom 50 of the headrest 10 is shown, it is seen that the outer pillow slip 40 has a lower peripheral portion 52 which overlaps the area defined by the bottom of the headrest. A second outer cover portion 54 preferably made of the same material as the outer pillow slip 40 covers the bottom 50 of the headrest and is overlapped by the lower peripheral portion 52 of the top cover 40. By bending the base pillow 12, the top cover is easily removed from the headrest 10 for washing. The bottom cover 54 is held onto the bottom of the base pillow 12 by VELCRO® so that it can be stripped from the bottom of the pillow for cleaning.

Referring now to Fig. 3, where foam bottom and top blocks 60 and 62 which form the core 58 of the head rest 10, are shown with the covers 40 and 54 removed, the foam block 60 forms the base pillow 12 while the foam block 62 forms the head pillow 35 which provides the raised portion 34. The foam block 62 head pillow is comprised of a bottom foam portion 63 which is relatively dense and thick and a top foam portion 64 which is less dense and relatively flexible. The foam block 62 has sloping sides comprised of a long back side 66 and two lateral sides 68 and 70. By having sloping sides the head portion 62 is

relatively comfortable and strands of hair 14 have a reduced tendency to crimp. The front side 72 of the top foam block 62 extends vertically with respect to the base pillow 12.

As is seen in the cross-sections of Figs. 4 and 5 where, for purposes of illustration, the top cover 40 and the bottom cover 54 are shown relatively loose, it is seen that in a preferred embodiment there is an inner cover 80 which is permanently attached around the foam blocks 60 and 62, which form the core 58 of the head rest 10. The inner cover 80 is preferably made of a relatively coarse material such as low count cotton which helps to keep the core clean and which forms a base for the outer, smoother top cover 40 and bottom cover 54 which are made of smoother materials such as high thread count cotton, satin, silk or NYLON®.

The bottom cover 54 is a panel which has VELCRO® hooked material 84 on a back surface thereof adjacent the periphery of the bottom cover. The hooks 84 couple with VELCRO® loops 86 which are on the inner cover 80 so as to removably affix the bottom outer cover 54 to the inner cover 80. The bottom peripheral portion 52 of the top cover 40 overlaps the bottom cover. As has been stated previously, in order to strip the top cover 40 off the head rest 10, the bottom foam block 60 is simply bent and the peripheral portion 52 is then slid up and over one of the sides 22, 26 or 28 of the headrest. Preferably, the head pillow 35 has a width at its base of about 8 inches and a width at its top of about 5 inches. The length of the head pillow from the edge 24 of the base pillow 12 is about 8 1/2 inches with the top being about 7

inches. The elevation or height of the head pillow 35 is about 3 1/2 inches above the top surface 30 of the base pillow 12.

The aforedescribed configuration provides a comfortable headrest 10 which allows a person to rest their head while only minimally disturbing their hair which rests on the satin surface 40 of the top cover which is smooth so as to not abrade against an unduly disturbed hair strands which have been styled.